

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a venture capital investment business, comprising:

establishing a business entity;

said business entity establishing an investment fund for venture capital;

establishing a fund managing entity of said investment fund, said fund managing entity attending to administrative matters relating to said investment fund and making investment decisions for the fund;

said investment fund having investors that provide capital contributions to said fund, said fund managing entity also providing capital contributions to said fund, said fund utilizing said contributions to invest in portfolio entities;

said investors receiving a general participation interest in said fund, and said fund managing entity receiving a carried interest in said fund;

providing said investors that have provided at least a threshold capital contribution to said fund with stock rights in said business entity to enable such investors to become shareholders in said business entity;

said business entity securing a portion of IPO shares that become available in said portfolio entities; and

said business entity enabling shareholders thereof to purchase IPO shares among said portion of IPO shares secured by said business entity that become available in said portfolio entities.

2. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, wherein said fund managing entity employs at least one other fund managing entity 26 to direct investment decisions, said at least one other fund managing entity 26 also being provided with stock rights in said business entity.

3. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 2, wherein said portfolio entities also receive stock rights in said business entity.

4. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, wherein in partial consideration for said fund investing in said portfolio entities, said portfolio entities agree that a portion of IPO shares that become available as a result of an IPO therein will be made available to shareholders of said business entity.

5. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to 4, wherein said shareholders of said business entity will be entitled to a percentage of said portion of IPO shares that is based on a pro-rata percentage of their stock ownership in said business entity, less any shares allocated otherwise.

6. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 5, wherein said shareholders in said business entity include:

- 1) direct shareholders in business entity;
- 2) said investors in said fund that have exercised stock options that they obtained in said business entity;

- 3) said at least one other fund managing entity that has exercised stock options that it obtained in said business entity; and
- 4) said portfolio entities that have exercised stock options that they obtained in said business entity.

7. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, wherein said business entity invests directly in additional portfolio entities, other than said portfolio entities invested in through said investment fund.

8. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, further comprising an investment manager/advisor that provides investment advice to the fund.

9. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, wherein said stock rights are options.

10. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, wherein said business entity establishes a family of investment funds, each of said funds investing in associated portfolio entities;

providing investors that have provided at least a threshold capital contribution to at least one of said funds with stock rights in said business entity to enable such investors to become shareholders in said business entity; and

said business entity enabling shareholders thereof to purchase IPO shares that become available in any of said portfolio entities of said family of funds.

11. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 10, wherein said business entity enables shareholders thereof to purchase IPO shares that become available in portfolio entities invested in directly by said business entity.

12. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, wherein said stock rights are warrants.

13. (Original) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 1, wherein said portfolio entities are also provided with stock rights in the business entity.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a venture capital investment business, comprising:

establishing a business entity,

said business entity establishing an investment fund for venture capital;

establishing a fund managing entity of said investment fund, said fund managing entity attending to administrative matters relating to said investment fund;

said investment fund having investors that provide capital contributions to said fund, said fund managing entity also providing capital contributions to said fund, said fund utilizing said capital contributions to invest in portfolio entities;

obtaining an agreement from said portfolio entities that a portion of IPO shares that became available as a result of an IPO therein will be made available to said business entity;
and

providing investors that have provided a threshold capital contribution amount to said fund with stock rights to purchase shares in said business entity, said investors thereby having an opportunity to purchase some of said the IPO shares among said portion of IPO shares made available to said business entity at the IPO price if such stock rights are exercised.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a venture capital investment business according to claim 14, wherein said investors are provided with stock rights to purchase shares in the business entity as partial consideration for said shareholders agreeing for said business entity to secure directed share subscription program (DSSP) or rights offering rights in said portfolio entities through said fund.

16. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a venture capital investment business, comprising:

establishing a business entity,

said business entity establishing an investment fund for venture capital;

establishing a fund managing entity of said investment fund, said fund managing entity attending to administrative matters relating to said investment fund;

said fund managing entity having at least one other fund managing entity to direct investment decisions for said fund,

said investment fund having investors that provide capital contributions to said fund, said fund managing entity also providing capital contributions to said fund, said fund utilizing said contributions to invest in portfolio entities;

obtaining an agreement from said portfolio entities that a portion of IPO shares that became available as a result of an IPO therein will be made available to said business entity;

providing said at least one other fund managing entity 26 with stock rights in said business entity to enable said at least one other fund managing entity 26 to become shareholders in said business entity;

said business entity securing a portion of IPO shares that become available in said portfolio entities; and

said business entity enabling shareholders thereof to purchase IPO shares among said portion of IPO shares secured by said business entity that become available in said portfolio entities.

17. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 14, where an amount of IPO shares that said at least one other fund managing entity 26 is entitled to obtain is based upon the performance of said fund and/or tenure of said at least one other fund managing entity 26.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of distributing stock rights, said method comprising:

receiving capital contribution information relating to an amount of capital contributed by an investor to a venture capital fund, the fund having investments in a portfolio entity entities;

comparing the capital contribution information to a threshold value; and

consequent to said comparing, assigning to the investor stock rights in a business entity having stock rights in the portfolio entity that has secured access to IPO shares that become available in the portfolio entities.

wherein when stock rights in the business entity are exercised by said investors, those investors have a right to purchase a specified portion of the IPO shares to which access has been secured by the business entity.

19. (Original) The method of distributing stock rights according to claim 18, wherein receiving capital contribution information includes:

receiving an investor identifier associated with the investor; and

based at least in part on a correspondence between the investor identifier and the capital contribution information, retrieving the capital contribution information from a computer storage element.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Original) The method of distributing stock rights according to claim 18, wherein said assigning stock rights includes allocating stock rights to the investor based at least in part on a relation between the capital contribution information and a total capital contribution amount by the investor.

22. (Original) The method of distributing stock rights according to claim 21, wherein allocating stock rights to the investor includes:

receiving a fund identifier associated with the fund; and

based at least in part on a correspondence between the fund identifier and the total capital contribution amount, retrieving the total capital contribution amount from a computer storage element.

23. (Original) The method of distributing stock rights according to claim 21, wherein allocating stock rights to the investor includes calculating a stock ownership percentage in the business entity,

wherein said stock ownership percentage is based at least in part on the relation between the capital contribution information and a total capital contribution amount.

24. (Original) The method according to claim 18, further comprising:
monitoring vesting of said stock rights based on said investors compliance with their commitments to make further investments.

25. (Currently Amended) A data storage medium, said data storage medium having machine-readable code stored thereon, the machine-readable code including instructions executable by an array of logic elements, the instructions defining a method comprising:

receiving capital contribution information relating to an amount of capital contributed by an investor to a venture capital fund, the fund having investments in a portfolio ~~entity~~ entities;

comparing the capital contribution information to a threshold value; and
consequent to said comparing, assigning to the investor stock rights in a business entity ~~having stock rights in the portfolio entity~~ that has secured access to IPO shares that become available in the portfolio entities.

wherein when stock rights in the business entity are exercised by said investors, those investors have a right to purchase a specified portion of the IPO shares to which access has been secured by the business entity.